

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please delete the paragraph on page 5, lines 5-8, and substitute therefor the following new paragraph:

-- The friction stir welding process is performed by rotating the tool 50, plunging the projection 52 into the joint region of the hollow members 31, 32, and moving the projection 52 along the joint region. The rotating center of the projection 52 is located between the two vertical plates 36, 36. Also shown in Fig. 1 are projections 37a, 37b, protruding from plates 33, 33, 34 and 34 of the members 31 and 32, and showing the positional relationship between the projections 37a, 37b, and the tool 50 for the friction stir welding. --

Please delete the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 1, through page 7, line 7, and substitute therefor the following new paragraph:

-- The embodiment of Figure 3 has a vertical plate 36 at the end of one hollow member 31, but not at the opposing end of the other hollow member 32. Corners in the vertical direction of the vertical plate 36 of the hollow member 31 are recessed so as to receive the ends of projecting pieces 38, 38 of the hollow member 32. These recessed portions are open in a direction of the thickness of the hollow member 31 and in a direction perpendicular to the thickness direction (toward the hollow member 32 side). When the projecting pieces 38 are placed (superposed) on the recessed portions, there is actually a clearance between them although they are in contact with each other in the figure. There is also a gap between the front ends of these members (i.e., between the projecting pieces 38, 38 and the corners 33a, 34b). The abutting joint portions on the upper face side of the two hollow members 31, 32 and the vertical plate 36 are situated directly below the center of the rotary tool 50. Also

shown in Fig. 3 are projections 37a and 37b, described in detail in connection with Fig. 7. The rotating center of the projection 52 of the welding tool 50 is disposed on an extension of the center line of the thickness of the vertical plate 36. That is, the joint region of the plate 33 (34) and plate 33 (34) is situated on the extension of the center line of the thickness of the vertical plate 36. The corners 33b, 34b extending from the plates 33, 34 to the recessed portions lie on an extension of the center line of the thickness of the vertical plate 36. Considering the gap between the corners 33b, 34b and the projecting pieces 38, the corners 33b, 34b are situated slightly to the left of the extension of the center line of the thickness of the vertical plate 36. The vertical plate 36 has a rigidity to support the downward force. The horizontal gap between the front ends of the projecting pieces 38 and the hollow member 31 is similar to that shown in Figure 1. The height of the projection 52 of the welding tool 50 is approximately equal to the thickness of the projecting piece 38. The region that is plastic and fluid extends below the projecting piece 38, and comes to have an area larger than the diameter of the projection 52, and the two hollow members 31, 32 are friction stir welded. It is desirable that the friction stir weld be so formed as to extend beyond the contact area between the underside of the projecting piece 38 and the vertical plate 36. --